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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*



THE NORTH VIETNAMESE CRISIS

Information as of 1300  
11 AUGUST 1964

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
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11 August 1964

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

**MEMORANDUM: The North Vietnamese Situation**



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. There are currently 176 MIG jet fighters and 20 IL-28 (Beagle) jet light bombers in areas of China contiguous to North Vietnam.

3. The 6 August report [REDACTED] of the presence of Chinese troops in North Vietnam is still unconfirmed. [REDACTED]

4. Chinese naval forces in all three fleet areas are continuing routine patrol and coastal survey activities. There are no indications that any interfleet movements southward are imminent or under way.

[REDACTED]

## II. OTHER COMMUNIST REACTIONS

### A. North Vietnam

1. Hanoi propaganda is making a concerted effort to portray the 2-5 August incidents as great victories for North Vietnam. No mention of North Vietnamese losses has been printed while extensive coverage has been given to the shootdown of the US aircraft and to the capture of one US pilot. The regime is evidently anxious to cover up its failures in order to avoid undercutting the morale of the North Vietnamese people and especially of the Viet Cong.

2. A North Vietnamese National Assembly Standing Committee resolution issued on 11 August praised the "valiant fight" of the Vietnamese Army and people, "particularly the antiaircraft and naval forces," and boasted of the "brilliant successes on 2 and 5 August."

3. The official Viet Cong reaction has been one of bold defiance toward the US. Hanoi radio on 10 August broadcast a Liberation Front statement asserting that the US "aggression" against North Vietnam "can only fan up the indignation and determination to fight and win" on the part of the "South Vietnamese people." The statement claimed that the "South Vietnamese people" will defeat their enemy despite the fact that the US "will send more troops and war material to South Vietnam."

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6. North Korean Premier Kim Il-sung, however, has cancelled plans to attend Indonesian independence celebrations on 17 August. Kim's trip, which would have been his first outside the bloc, was called off "in view of various matters currently facing the DPRK," according to an Indonesian radio announcement on 11 August. The North Korean decision apparently reflects Pyongyang's uncertainty concerning future developments in Southeast Asia. North Korean Army, naval, and air units have been placed on alert status because of the crisis.

#### B. Communist China

1. Chinese Communist propaganda attacks on the US continue to mount in an effort to keep domestic and international attention focused on the crisis. An analysis in People's Daily on 11 August concentrates on refuting American accounts of the second North Vietnamese attack against US warships--which the Chinese call a "barefaced lie with many loopholes" designed to justify "expanding the war." The article cites stories in Le Monde and the British Yorkshire Post to support their contention and quotes selectively from the American press to pick holes in the US case.

2. Stage managed "popular" demonstrations are now going on in all major Chinese cities. According to Peiping broadcasts 17 million people have so far taken part in parades and rallies to demonstrate their support for North Vietnam. Such public circuses, designed as much for their impact outside China as for their effect on the population, are a standard response to crisis situations involving the US anywhere in the world.

3. For example, Peiping claimed that 16 million people participated in demonstrations connected with the Panama incident last January. When China is directly involved, efforts to stir up popular "enthusiasm" are vastly greater. During the three month Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 more than 300 million Chinese were alleged to have "opposed America" by demonstrating in the streets.

4. The Chinese continue to attack Soviet conduct in this crisis and on 10 August broadcast an article from a left-wing Cambodian paper entitled "Soviet Paper Tiger." Peiping's version of the Cambodian story refers to Soviet "indifference"

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to the plight of another socialist state. They claim that the "excessive prudence" of the Soviet UN resolution had "shocked all observers" and asserted that capitulation by Moscow had removed all restraints from the US and "mortgaged the struggle of neutralist countries against imperialism."

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